

Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI)

Background

The Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI) initiative provides free technical assistance for up to two years to help rural towns and regions create and implement economic development plans.

USDA's Innovation Center created the REDI initiative to support recommendations identified in the Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity. The recommendations outline steps to develop the rural economy and support quality of life.

How it Works

In September 2018, USDA awarded \$1.2 million in cooperative agreements to four capacity-building organizations offering specialized planning expertise. The agreements help the partners finance the free assistance.

In June 2019, USDA and its partners selected 48 rural communities and regions on a competitive basis to receive planning assistance from one of the four partner organizations.

Who are the Partners

The partners are the [National Association of Counties Research Foundation](#), the [Rural Community Assistance Partnership](#), [McClure Engineering Company](#), and [Purdue University Extension/Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky](#).

The following is a brief overview of the type of assistance each partner will provide:

- The [National Association of Counties Research Foundation](#) is partnering with the [National Association of Regional Councils](#) to develop a peer-learning program. Local and regional leaders in six rural communities and regions will be trained to implement multi-jurisdictional economic development plans and projects. The program will include workshops, team mentoring, educational webinars, community case studies and interactive learning. USDA provided a \$138,780 cooperative agreement to help finance the free technical assistance.
- [McClure Engineering Company](#) is partnering with [CO.STARTERS](#), a Tennessee-based consulting firm, to help four rural communities and regions build plans to spur economic and community development, strengthen workforce readiness programs, and support entrepreneurship. USDA provided a \$200,000 cooperative agreement to help finance the free technical assistance.
- [Purdue University Extension/Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky](#) will support eight communities and regions to build long-term economic development plans by leveraging public and private funding sources. USDA provided a \$406,949 cooperative agreement to help finance the free technical assistance.
- The [Rural Community Assistance Partnership](#) will provide technical assistance to 29 rural communities and regions through the organization's [WealthWorks](#) model. This model will help rural regions and communities identify and market local assets. USDA provided a \$477,208 cooperative agreement to help finance the free technical assistance.

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What is an Actionable Economic Development Plan?

An actionable economic development plan includes:

- Evidence-based assessments;
- Quantifiable goals;
- Plans to improve the local and regional economy; and
- Metrics to track implementation and progress.

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